NATIONAL WATER TRAIL SYSTEM

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION



Overview: The information collected in the NWTS Application is used by reviewers to determine if a water trail should be moved forward for designation. If your trail is selected to be moved forward there will be opportunities to refine and modify application materials. However, anything that you feel reviewers need to know about your trail should be included in the initial application. The NWTS Application contains six sections. Each section asks for information concerning the water trail being nominated. After a brief overview of the application process and resources, each section will be described below and where appropriate, clarifications and references to toolboxes will be made.

Getting Started: The NWTS Application is an interactive PDF. Text is directly entered into the document and should be saved frequently. Once a copy of the application has been downloaded from the NWTS website, the document should be saved at a secure and easily found location. Using the 'Save As' function, the document should be renamed using the following naming convention: 'NWTS_[trail name]_[mm.dd.yy].pdf.

Example: NWTS_BlueRiverTrail_02.09.12.pdf

Submitting the Application: When all information has been entered into the NWTS Application and collected in supporting materials, all materials should be emailed to NWTS@nps.gov. The subject line of that email should include the following 'NWTS Application [trail name].' The following naming convention should be applied to all materials being attached to email: '[trail name]_Sec#_[document name.'

Examples:

NWTS Application Blue River Trail (Email subject line)

BlueRiverTrail_Sec5_Photo1.pdf (Required representative photograph)

BlueRiverTrail_Sec5_Map.pdf (Required water trail map)

BlueRiverTrail_Sec3_Contact_Info.docx (Additional water trail manager information)

BlueRiverTrail_Sec6_Brochure.pdf (Additional supporting material)

Toolboxes: The NWTS website contains a 'Toolbox' page. There are two toolboxes within that page: Best Management Practices (BMP) Toolbox and Mapping Toolbox. The BMP toolbox contains exemplary examples of how water trails can be managed. The Mapping Toolbox contains resources and examples for trail managers who do not have access to geospatial software or systems. The toolboxes serve to help both applicants and existing water trail managers.

NWTS Application: The following information directly corresponds to sections you will find in the NWTS Application

SECTION 1: TRAIL INFORMATION This section asks for basic water trail information, detailed information and visitation and fee information.

BASIC WATER TRAIL INFORMATION

Water trail name

Water trail location-Provide a brief description of where the trail is located, particularly in relation to landmarks. Someone who is not familiar with the water trail should be able to roughly know where the trail is located after reading this section.

Directions to water trail- Provide directions to the water trail that will be useful to the majority of users. The goal of this section is to give users a more detailed idea of where the trail is located.

City(ies), Township(s) cross by the water trail- Those which touch the water trail and are also highly associated with the water trail

State(s)

Congressional District(s)

Existing water trail website (specifically for this water trail)- please provide the appropriate URL. This website will be provided on the NWTS website and should be regularly maintained by the water trail manager.

DETAILED WATER TRAIL INFORMATION

Length of water trail- Provide the total length of the water trail in miles and if trail is a loop. If multiple trail segments at times use the same 'path' only count that length once.

Other existing designations- If your water trail has already been designated by other agencies or organizations please list them. For example, if a state designation has been granted please list the name of that designation.

Uses and Activities- Select any of the listed uses and activities that pertain to the water trail. If the water trail includes uses and activities not listed, please provide them in the 'Other' section. If you feel clarification is needed provide additional information in 'Notes.'

Accessibility Information Available?- Please answer by selecting all of the information sources currently available for the water trail which contain accessibility information.

Water trail & surrounding surfaces- Select any of the listed water trail types and surrounding surface types that apply to the water trail.

Short description of the water trail- Provide a quick 'snap shot' of the water trail. This should allow a reader to gain a broad level understanding of what the water trail provides. This information will be used in press releases and also on the NWTS website if the trail is designated.

Long description of the water trail- Provide a more thorough overview or the water trail. This should reiterate what is in the 'short description' and also highlight what makes the trail nationally significant and what sets the trail apart from others. As appropriate, describe the water trail's history and evolution including concept, lay-out, partnerships, historic uses, political uses and special events. Describe the water trail's main features and the benefits it provides to users.

VISITATION INFORMATION

Open dates- enter the time period for which the water trail is open, using month and day ranges.

Times of operation- Select specific times within the above time period that the water trail is open. If there are specific seasonal closures such as a particular weekend or time period when the water trail will be closed please list this is under 'Seasonal Closures.'

Fees- list fees where appropriate. If one of the fee times does not apply to the water trail please enter zero.

Visitation and fee notes- If there is anything else that you feel is important to share concerning visitation and fees that the application does not cover please write it in the space provided.

SECTION 2: BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES This section is an opportunity to describe, in detail, how the water trail is exemplary. The seven BMP categories have been identified by the NWTS as important benchmarks of a National Water Trail. For each category describe how your trail addresses the BMP. To see examples of previous NWTS BMP responses, see the 'Best Management Practice Toolbox' on the NWTS website.

Mission Statement- In this section provide a mission statement for the water trail that is reflective of the seven BMP categories. This is an opportunity to showcase the outstanding qualities of the water trail and the ways it is managed.

Recreation Opportunities- Please describe how the water trail provides public access points that accommodate a diversity of trip lengths and a variety of opportunities for recreation and education. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

Education- Please describe how the water trail provides opportunities to learn about the value of water resources, cultural heritage and boating skills and outdoor ethics.

Restoration- Please describe how the water trail provides opportunities for communities to develop and implement strategies that enhance and restore the health of the local waterways and surrounding lands. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

Community Support- Please describe how local communities provide support and advocacy for the maintenance and stewardship of the water trail. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

Public Information- Please describe how the water trail managers provide the public with accessible and understandable water trail information, including details for identifying access and trail routes; cultural, historic, and natural features; hazards; and water quality. Also describe how the water trail is promoted to the community and broad national audience. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

Trail Maintenance- Please describe how the water trail managers demonstrate the ability to support routine and long-term maintenance investments on the water trail. Also describe how facilities are designed, constructed, and maintained incorporating sustainability principles. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

Planning- Please describe how the water trail managers maintain a water trail plan that describes a vision, desired future conditions, and strategies to strengthen best management practices. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

SECTION 3: CONTACT INFORMATION This section asks for contact information for the agency or organization managing the water trail. If there are multiple managing agencies and/or organizations, please provide the same information for each in subsequent contact information pages. If there are more than three, either duplicate one of these pages or provide all requested information in a word document. This document can be submitted with the application as described in Section 6.

Applicant Contact Information- This section asks for standard contact information for the primary water trail managing agency or organization as well as any secondary water trail managing agency or organization. As previously stated, please provide the same information for all managing agencies or organizations.

Designation Letter- After the first page of 'Contact Information' there is a separate section concerning the designation letter that will be sent to managing agencies upon official designation. The information collected in this section will appear on the official designation letter.

SECTION 4: OWNER CONSENT & STATE SUPPORT In this section documents which fill the two requirements of owner consent and state support should be listed and described. They will then be submitted along with the application as described in Section 6. There is one requirement: 1. All water trail access points must be open to the public and have owner consent to be part of the water trail. These documents will be submitted with the application as described in Section 6.

SECTION 5: PHOTO, **MAPPING & LOGO** In this section a representative water trail photograph, water trail map, and X,Y coordinate should be provided. These materials will be used in press releases and on the NWTS website. If you do not have the below products or information, please refer to the 'Mapping Toolbox' located on the NWTS website. This toolbox includes detailed instructions on how to create a map product and determine an X,Y coordinate using free internet programs. Examples are also provided.

Photographs, Maps & Logo- At least one photograph which is representative of the water trail needs to be submitted with the application. Multiple photographs can be submitted. In addition, one map of the water trail needs to be submitted. The map should provide basic location information of the water trail and access points as well as nearby landmarks such as cities and roads. If available, a logo specific to the water trail should be provided as well. The photograph, map and logo need to be of high-resolution and quality. A brief description of what is contained in each photograph and/or map should be provided that will orient the reader. These products will be submitted along with the application as described in Section 6.

Mapping Information- A single latitude and longitude coordinate for the water trail needs to be provided. This information will be transformed into a single point on a map within the NWTS website. The coordinate should be representative of your trail's overall location (the center line of the trail system, the main access point, etc.).

SECTION 6: SUBMITTING APPLICATION MATERIALS This section outlines how the application and all supporting materials should be submitted for review. A description of the types of supporting materials is provided along with a naming convention system for those materials.